

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor United States Marine Corps Sergeant Clinton W. Ahlquist of Creede, Colorado, who was killed in the line of duty while serving his country honorably in Iraq.

Sergeant Ahlquist wore his Nation's uniform proudly, and we should all pay tribute to this brave and courageous young man.

Every day our men and women in uniform willingly face unknown dangers as part of the effort to promote peace and democracy throughout the world. Their individual stories of honor and courage must not be forgotten.

Clinton Ahlquist moved to Creede, Colorado, during his freshman year of high school. Clinton touched countless lives during his 3 years at Creede High School.

Ahlquist was killed in Ar Ramadi, Iraq on Tuesday, February 20, 2007, by an improvised explosive device while patrolling a Medivac helicopter. He was 20 years old.

My heart goes out to Clinton's family and friends and those whose lives he touched throughout his service to our country. I am humbled by their strength and perseverance in the face of such hardship.

Sergeant Ahlquist died performing noble deeds, serving and protecting his fellow countrymen. Clinton and his family and friends have exhibited a rare form of selflessness and courage.

Madam Speaker, I submit this recognition to the United States House of Representatives in honor of their sacrifice so that Clinton W. Ahlquist may live on in memory.

PENCE EXCHANGE WITH AMBASSADOR RICHARD C. HOLBROOK

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PENCE. As many Democrats make plans to cut or restrict funding to our troops in Iraq, yesterday before the Foreign Affairs Committee a dissenting voice came from a surprising place. Richard Holbrook was the former Assistant Secretary of State for the Clinton administration and has worked in diplomatic roles for every Democratic President since Lyndon Johnson.

Yesterday, Ambassador Holbrook appeared before our committee and I asked him directly, Do you oppose efforts to eliminate or reduce funding to our troops on the ground in Iraq? Ambassador Holbrook responded: "I do, I oppose it." When I asked him to elaborate, he went on to say: "I think that if the Commander in Chief has deployed the troops, the ultimate weapon of denying them the resources to carry out their mission only puts them in harm's way, greater harm's way. I would remind you that we cannot cut the troop funding."

I commend Ambassador Holbrook for his storied career in American foreign affairs and his willingness to speak truth to power, even the power of many in his own political party.

As Ambassador Holbrook said yesterday before the Foreign Affairs Committee: "We cannot cut off funding for our troops."

HONORING THE LIFE OF GEORGE BECKER

(Mr. ALTMIRE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, as we take a very important vote for organized labor today, I rise to honor the life of George Becker, who passed away last month.

George served as president of the United Steelworkers of America from 1993 to 2001. He started working in a mill in 1944 at the age of 15. He fought in World War II and Korea.

After fighting for his country abroad, he spent over 50 years fighting for working Americans here at home. As president of the Steelworkers, George Becker fought tirelessly for workplace safety, for workers' rights and for fair trade practices.

I wish to express my sincere condolences to George Becker's wife, Jane, my constituent and my friend. Jane shared life with George for 57 years. George Becker will be deeply missed, but his selfless devotion to America's workers will always be remembered.

OPPOSITION TO H.R. 800

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, it is clearly and cleverly entitled the "Employee Free Choice Act," but we are about to consider a bill that strips away the very tool that protects the sanctity of a free and open society, the private ballot.

Private ballots ensure workers have elections without fraudulent interference, coercion, or intimidation. Confidence will be lost with a system that forces workers to publicly declare their intentions. The AFL-CIO recognized this hypocrisy by expressing support for secret ballots when workers are presented the opportunity to decertify a union. They have argued that private ballot elections "provide the surest means for avoiding decisions which are the result of group pressures and not individual decisions."

As a former union steelworker, I believe in the merits of unionization, when appropriate. I also believe that every American worker should have the right to choose freely and privately. Congress has a duty to defeat legislation that strips workers of this important right, and I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 800.

KUCINICH OPPOSED TO ATTACK ON IRAN

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. I am totally opposed to any attack on Iran. It would have disastrous consequences for Iran, the U.S., the region and the world. It would put 140,000 U.S. troops in great jeopardy. It would expose Israel to maximum peril. Even the talk about such an attack should be subject to a review not only by Congress, but by an international tribunal. Iran has neither the intention nor the capability of attacking the United States, yet the administration has been preparing for some time for an aggressive war against Iran.

Congress must insist the administration come forward now with facts, not fiction, regarding Iran. We must not allow the President to remain unchallenged while he continues to use the media to create a pretext for an illegal war.

Congress must insist the President come to the full Congress for permission to take any action against Iran. If the President proceeds to attack Iran after an express congressional authorization under article I, section 8, both he and the Vice President should be subject to impeachment.

We must take a stand against aggressive war or we will lose our democracy.

TALKS WITH IRAN AND SYRIA

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, the Secretary of State made news this week. During testimony before Congress she announced that the U.S. will join high level talks with Iran and Syria to work towards stability of the Middle East. Madam Speaker, this is a welcomed step in the right direction.

Diplomacy must not be the only option available to us, but it should certainly be one of them. President Reagan understood this principle. In dealing with the Soviets, he never shied away from publicly denouncing their acts of aggression and their disregard for human rights. Even so, he maintained open lines of communication with his Soviet counterparts throughout his Presidency. Reagan did so because he understood a very important principle, when done in the right way, tackling with your enemies is a sign of strength, not a sign of weakness. You don't have to give anyone away in order to dialogue.

The same can be true today. Talking with Iran and Syria and continuing to promote stability in the region can go hand in hand if done in the right way. This is the right move, and I applaud the administration for making it.